

FOREWORD

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the time when these studies can be of value to the administrator, the educator, and the medical practitioner. Using the results of field research, I have made the following study in the hope that it may be of practical value in helping to cope with some of the problems brought about by the expansion of western civilization. 121

Although the change taking place on Kambara in many ways is unique, it is one example of the adjustment of preliterate people, that is people without a written tradition, to western culture throughout the world. Although the results of a study of what is happening in one small area may not be applied uncritically to another, they should throw light on the general problem of how culture changes and can be changed. Moreover, the comparison of a number of detailed studies of specific groups of people should lead to a clearer understanding of the processes set in motion by the expansion of western civilization and of the problems of scientific administration.

The material on which this study is based was gathered during nine months of ethnological field work in the Fiji islands in 1933-34, and the data presented in this study apply to this date unless otherwise specified. While in Fiji I learned to know the natives of the eastern islands, their language and their culture by actually living among them in their villages and participating in their daily life. From my headquarters in Tokalau village on Kambara I studied the people of the island and made trips by native canoe, since no other transportation was available, to the neighboring islands of Wangava, Namuka-i-Lau, Mothe, Fulanga, and Ongea. These trips, which varied from 3 to 40 miles each on the open sea, were made in native outrigger canoes with crab claw sails of mat. Whether we skimmed in a stiff gale over the deep sea swells, lay becalmed under the scorching sun, or strained our eyes through the darkening night to hold our course to the faint low silhouette of an island, these canoe voyages were one of the highlights of my sojourn in Lau. 114 123

132 Kambara is situated about 19 degrees south of the equator, and so has a tropical climate. During the dry season, which lasts from April to October, the cooling southeast trades blow regularly and the seas are calm. Most of the lively canoe traffic between the islands is carried on in these months. Although the temperature rarely falls below 70° the thin-blooded natives frequently shiver with cold, especially after the sun goes down. The remainder of the year is rainy and hot with irregular winds, especially during the "hurricane" months of January, February and March. At this time few native crews venture in canoes beyond the protecting reefs, for a small black cloud on the horizon can suddenly develop into an ugly squall which rips a mat sail and tosses a canoe about like a toy boat on a mighty ocean.

There is a difference in climate between the west and the east sides of Kambara. The east side is cooler and less humid than the west on account of the southeast trades. This may in part account for the greater energy and productivity in craftsmanship shown by the people of Undu and Tanggu compared to those of Tokalau and Lomatchi. During the hot season in Tokalau the temperature in my native hut, which had a sheet iron roof, averaged 90° F. at seven in the morning and 102° at two in the afternoon.

123 In the heat of the day we frequently worked under a
514 pavilion roofed with plaited coconut leaves, near the beach,
[343] in the hope of catching whatever slight breeze might be playing along the shore. There was considerable amusement over selection of a site for this pavilion. During the first weeks in Tokalau I chose the coolest spot along the beach and requested that the pavilion be built there. Located some distance from the village, the place was sheltered by palms and brush. At this time I still had the naive notion that I could arrange a little privacy for interviews with informants who frequently hesitate to speak in the presence of others, and also for the few precious leisure hours I had to enjoy this "South

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Sea paradise". I saw a twinkle in the kindly eye of the village headman, but he paid no attention to my request and began preparations to erect the pavilion on the most frequented path from the village to the shore. It was cooler, he said. I became suspicious and finally one of the native boys hesitatingly confided that the lovely spot was used as the village privy. As at Tokalau, the whole beach near a native village is usually polluted in this part of the world. Hence the government is conducting an extensive campaign for soil sanitation. Latrines have been built near every village but are as yet rarely used.

There are no mosquitoes on Kambara, but on some neighboring islands, especially Fulanga and Oneata, mosquitoes are very troublesome. During the "hurricane" months on Fulanga each village moves at night to its own wind-swept islet in the central lagoon to avoid the swarms of mosquitoes which appear on the main island. The people of Naivindamu sleep in four temporary huts which have been built on the table top of a mushroom-shaped islet not more than 50 feet in diameter.

The people of Kambara say that in olden days Kambara had many mosquitoes but Oneata had none. Moreover, the *kekeo*, a delicious shellfish now prevalent in the lake at Wangava, was not found there but grew on the Oneata reef. Once the forefather god of Oneata visited Kambara. While lying under a mosquito curtain of barkcloth at night he heard the buzzing of mosquitoes outside. "What was that beautiful music I heard last night?" he asked the god of Kambara next morning. "It was the mosquitoes," said the god of Kambara. "Give me some mosquitoes to take back to the people of Oneata that they too may hear the beautiful sound," said the god of Oneata. "I will give you the mosquitoes," said the cunning god of Kambara, "if you will give me the *kekeo*, the shellfish of Oneata." "Good," said the god of Oneata, well pleased. He returned to Oneata and gathered

INTRODUCTION

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Lau, just eighty years ago, were strictly forbidden, 173
 perhaps wisely in those early days, to talk about 869
 anything at all connected with their old mythology. 797
 So that as children they did not hear from their
 mothers the old tales that even one generation
 before would have been so freely told to them.

However, in those islands where no resident
 missionary was stationed, the rule was not so [123] •
 strictly enforced, and it is there that I have
 been able to collect some of the most interesting
 stories.

Stories of the gods are ethnologically the most 773
 fascinating of all, especially among a totemistic 776
 people; and the Polynesians in a general sense
 were ancestor-worshippers, and held sacred [771]
 certain beasts, birds, and fishes, wherein dwelt their
 gods; although they never set up special idols
 to them, as the Papuan race seems to have done.
 The value of an old legend—when established and
 corroborated—for purposes of ethnological inves-
 tigation is immense, but on the other hand
 there is always the danger that an imperfect
 legend may lead one very much astray by setting
 one's feet upon a track which proves false, and only
 takes one farther away the more one pursues
 it. An amusing instance of this occurred not 773
 long ago. I was investigating the old snake 177
 legend of Vulaga Island (an island, incidentally, 123
 on which no snakes are ever found). A man told

1773 me his *Kalou Vu*—his ancestral god—was a
177 red serpent, and that *Vulaga* was *Tauvu*—of
●123 common origin—with Totoya Island (where snakes
are found). So far so good. I then asked him
if he knew the name of this *Kalou Vu*. He
replied, "His name was that of the Chief of all the
Devils, the Blessed Pope!" Thinking that this
was rather strong partizanship for even the most
ardent Wesleyan, I asked again, and this time
he pronounced it a little differently, as "*Bilesi
Popu*." He then said it was well-known in the
Bible, and all at once it flashed across me—
"Beelzebub."

174 But here one sees the error one can so easily
171 fall into. This man had, with some confusion,
read in his Bible of Beelzebub and also of serpents,
and consequently adopted, quite wrongly, this
name for the ancient *Kalou Vu* of his race. For
I certainly do not think there has yet been dis-
covered surviving among either Papuans or Poly-
nesians any distinct names of the old gods of
Asia, although many of the ancient customs of
Syrians, Jews, etc., point to a branch of these
races having wandered from Asia *via* the Malay
Islands to the Pacific. I refer to such things as
Circumcision, the legend of the Ark and eight
survivors, the legend of the Dove, the legend of
the Tower of Babel, the Arab custom of striking
the open mouth with the flat hand to denote

SOUTH SEA MAGIC.

We were running along the coast in smooth water beneath the high cliffs of Vanua Balavu, the northernmost island of the Lau Group—a group whose scattered islets dot the sun-kissed Pacific over a stretch of two hundred miles between the colony of Fiji and the island kingdom of Tonga. It was a sunny afternoon, and, reclining on a long chair on the deck of the little government yacht that carries the District Commissioner about on his multifarious duties, I was drowsily listening to the throbbing of the engines when I noticed one of the crew, a fuzzy-headed convict, gazing intently at a little bay between the cliffs. (The crew of the government yacht are always made up from the gaol, and this plan works excellently, as the Lauans are born sailors, and under the firm discipline of an experienced captain, and with a warder always on board with them, there is never any trouble to be feared. Indeed, most of them are gaol-birds of but mild hue, with wings temporarily clipped for comparatively trifling offences, petty larceny

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[673] being one of the most common, as the Polynesian Lauan—true to type—is by nature more light-fingered than his semi-Papuan brother of Fiji.

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[576] I asked the man what he saw; and, seating himself cross-legged in the attitude of respect, he politely answered, "It is nothing, sir, I was but thinking of Filipi, a man formerly of my town."

"And what about Filipi? What did he do?" I inquired.

"He is dead," he answered, looking down at the deck.

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754 Knowing from the man's attitude that there was something behind all this I asked him freely to tell me all. No one enjoys "spinning a yarn" more than a South Sea islander when he really gets started, and many interesting old legends, and, incidentally, helpful facts in my work, have I picked up in this way on some of my lengthy sea-journeys about the group.

[201] "It was this way, sir," he began. "It was said that *dua na vakadraudrau ca* (some evil magic) was performed at that place there," pointing with his chin—the same gesture his Malayan ancestors had used thousands of years before—at the little bay we were passing. "I know nothing of it myself," he hastily added. "It is only what I have heard, and it happened years ago, just before you, sir, first came to Lau. Now, Filipi and a man of Nayau Island were doing

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and twenty willing hands laboured at the heavy task. The keel of the ship was loosely on the rocks (though within a few feet of deep water), and the huge breakers were lifting her up and down on one side with great bumps as if some giant hand was trying to make her bounce. The captain dashed below to see if the water was rushing in or not, for that constituted the real danger. Perched on the very brow of a sort of submarine precipice, she might slide over at any moment, and if a hole had been made in her she would sink instantly, like a stone, in about fifty fathoms of water.

Luckily her frame was sound, and no leak was reported; and my own private servant (a Lauan, and therefore a born sailor) with two of the crew had already dashed out on to the reef with the heavy kedge anchor and a great coir cable, and almost before we knew what had happened the windlass was at work and we were being dragged along the reef inch by inch into smoother water, and away from the surf-battered edge of the "precipice."

- 123 Finding that everything was all right I be-
thought myself of my own comfort, and getting
together a few clothes and the Government papers
I set off for the island of Doi, some three or four
miles away, with four of the crew, in the life-boat.
The surf played havoc with my things, and it was

A SOUTH SEA SYMPOSIUM

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a very wet and disconsolate castaway that eventually stepped on the sandy beach of Doi, and turning round sat down to gaze at the ship and meditate on the prospects of getting home again. Here was I, on a tiny islet, inhabited by a handful of natives, at the extreme south of the Fiji group—so far south, indeed, as to be well on the way towards New Zealand, and not on the Fiji chart at all—and if the ship were disabled or unable to be floated off again I might be settled here for a month before a relief ship could reach me. There is, of course, no “wireless” on such remote islands as this, and the Ono Islands are seldom touched at beyond my own annual visit of inspection.

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We eventually floated the vessel off, after a trying time of several days on the reef; and what with that and a severe gale that subsequently arose I was detained at Ono for some eleven days, during which I spoke no English, and found for literature only a copy of the *Auckland Weekly News*, just fifteen months old, to amuse myself with. It was during that time, when we sat out in the warm, moonlit nights, watching the distant reef, and wondering always whether *that* night's tide would be sufficient to float her free, that I heard some of the old-time tales of the ancient gods of Lau.

There is a fair-sized village at Doi, and, luckily, the Chief of the Island was a most intelligent

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115 man, though of a somewhat dreamy nature,
 ● 123 and although he pretended to laugh at these tales
 [361] of olden days, I could see that he more than half
 [622] believed them. But being intelligent he was,
 at all events, able to tell a connected story, and
 also help me elicit one from others; and some of
 the tales I heard then I now set down.

"Did you hear that, sir?" he said, suddenly,
 one night as we were seated on the beach with
 some of the local islanders round a little wood
 [276] fire, kept up more for the sake of re-lighting
 [372] the oft-renewed *sulukas*, or native cheroots, than
 for actual warmth.

[534] "That" was the distant beating of a *lali*, the
 big wooden drum found in all Lauan villages.
 The air was still, yet the sound was but faint
 that came to us from over the great lagoon that
 stretches between Doi and Ono Islands. I had
 several times heard the Ono *lali* before; and on
 calm days such as this it had seemed quite close,
 and certainly different from this faint sound,
 which now had ceased altogether. Some of the
 men looked at each other.

"Perhaps it is *Sagasagawalé*, for I know of
 no meeting to be summoned at Ono to-night,
 and why else should the drum be sounded?"
 said one of them, a little awkwardly.

"Don't be a fool," said the Chief, with a
 curt laugh. "These are enlightened times, and

[Text continues on p. 70]

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- 115 *Sagasagawalé* is not rung now," and he stooped
● 123 to throw another stick on the fire.

But as he sat up again he turned to me, and said a little doubtfully, "It was the Ono *lali*, sir, was it not?"

"How should I know?" I answered, somewhat amused. "I am a stranger here; you people must know your own *lalis* better than I do. But who or what is *Sagasagawalé* anyhow? But, first of all," I added, "tell some one to go and get [276] some *Yagona* with this shilling from the store of Joni, and a bowl shall be prepared out here." For I knew that if there was any tale to be told the South Sea kava would bring it to the surface.

THE RAPE OF "SAGASAGAWALÉ."

Soon was started the rhythmical pounding of the *Yagona* stone, crushing the dried root between it and the large flat slab below. And then Wiliami, the Chief of Doi, turned to me and said:

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173 "In the old days, in the times of our forefathers, there was war in the land, and on this island and on Great Ono there was much fighting, and all lived in forts on the hill-tops, nor was there ever any rest for us. But there came a day when Matokano town, across the lagoon there, became the strongest, and its chief, Tui Matokano, ruled the land. Then there was peace, but all looked

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demons when one hears it. And the people at Matokano named their drum *Sagasagawale*, which means 'All our work for nothing.' *Sagasagawale* was still standing at Matokano town when my father was a young man, for he saw it, though it had then nearly rotted away."

The *Yagona* was now prepared, and a young man brought me the first cup, holding it up with both hands; and all called out "*Maca*" when I had drunk; for even in the most informal gatherings the people never omit the due ceremonies connected with *Yagona* drinking.

THE GHOSTLY HEAD OF ULUPOKA.

Then when the others had each had their drink I asked if the gods always flew, or how did they get from place to place? I heard one man, the island constable, who owned the appropriate name of "Jonetani Gucake" (Jonathan the Zealous), whisper something about "Ulupoka."

"Well, Jonetani, and what about Ulupoka?" I asked.

Then Jonetani settled himself comfortably on his crossed legs, tailor fashion, and said:

"In the old times we of Ono had a god (and I have heard that he was also a god of Lakeba) called 'Ulupoka.' But he was *dua na ka rerevaka dina* (a fearsome thing of awe), and was

A SOUTH SEA SYMPOSIUM

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when he is about. You know the light *kato* (palm-leaf baskets) that are often thrown away empty about the town. 'Ulupoka' delights to climb into these, and sometimes when there is not a breath of wind one may see a basket suddenly go rolling along across the grass. Then we know that 'Ulupoka' has got into it."

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The others all nodded their heads in acquiescence, and murmured "*Sa dina*" ('tis true).

THE FISHING OF THE SACRED "YAWA."

On another night we were speaking of fishing, and of the best-flavoured fish; for when one gets down to the primitive life one's thoughts turn naturally to food, and I was no exception, for there was not much else to talk about.

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"The *saga* is good, and the *kanacé* is good, but the *nuga* is sweetest of all," said the native magistrate, a noted fisherman, who was sitting next to me.

"True are your words, sir," said a Doi man, sitting opposite; "but I think you cannot have tasted the *yawa*, the great fresh-water fish of Vanua Balavu."

"No. What is that, Rusiate?" replied the native magistrate.

"It is the sweetest fish in all the world, sir," replied Rusiate; "but it is sacred to the people of

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THE DUEL 'TWEEN GOD AND GHOST.

I WAS riding along the white beaches of Cicia Island with my native magistrate, after a very trying day in the provincial courts, deciding such trifling points (though important to the natives) as alleged thefts of copra, petty assaults—with scores of contrary witnesses on each side—or cases of conjugal infidelity, and was already feeling refreshed and invigorated by a swift canter against the evening breeze. Reining up as we came to a patch of sea-worn pebbles and stones, with here and there a knob of filagree branching coral over which our horses stepped gingerly, my friend Wiliami turned to me and said:

“Just there, sir, by the roadside, you may perhaps see among the palm-trees an upright stone. That is the throne of Rata Maibula, the ancient god of Tarakua town, who was worsted in the great duel with the ghost of Ratu Koli.”

Scenting a good legend, and knowing Wiliami of old as one who had the judicial mind, and an unbiassed view-point—despite his brown skin—I thought that here was an opportunity to get

A NIGHT SCENE ON NAYAU ISLAND.

ONE of the experiences that has remained most vivid in my mind, and which created a lasting impression, was a torchlight ceremony that took place when I was once visiting the island of Nayau, in company with the Secretary for Native Affairs, who was on a special mission from the Governor. We had just landed from the government yacht, after a quick run across the twenty miles or so of open sea from Lakeba Island, when the "Buli," or local chief of the island, came up to me and asked permission to hold this ceremony that same evening, in honour of the *Talai*, or deputy of the Governor. 123 574 •

He said that although it was getting dark they had arranged to carry it on by torchlight, and that they wished to receive us in the real manner that in ancient days had been the custom in Nayau.

Proceeding in single file along the narrow track through the bush, the land crabs scuttling away at our approach, we passed on to a broader turf road lit by the red rays of the fast setting sun,

123 and walked along for some distance, the islanders
 574 joining our little retinue behind and asking, with
 many jests and flashes of white teeth, the latest
 gossip from "the capital." Presently, a horse-
 123 man approached, splendidly upright, and making
 574 a fine picture with his great head of hair carefully
 492 combed out, and his proud cast of countenance.
 But his saddlery would hardly have passed
 muster in Rotten Row, for it consisted of a loose
 sack thrown across the pony, and a short length
 of rope twisted loosely round the animal's nose
 by a noose in the middle, the two ends running
 backwards to form the reins! Equipped thus,
 he yet maintained a beautiful seat; and at our
 approach vaulted off with an astonishing dex-
 terity, and remained standing until we had passed,
 a smile of welcome lighting up his handsome
 [576] features.¹ I heard my clerk ask him where he
 was going (the usual form of salutation in these
 islands, and not intended for unseemly curiosity),
 and his reply was, "To the next town to let them
 know the Turagas have arrived."

123 On nearing the town our approach was sighted
 574 by watchful boys, who raced back with a flash of
 [534] brown legs, and presently we heard the deep
 booming of the *lali*² announcing our arrival.
 [516] Passing along the main street of the town, bor-
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¹ According to Polynesian custom no one may be (literally) raised to a higher position than a chief.

² Hollow wooden drum.

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dered with shady bread-fruit trees and carpeted 123 ●
with beautifully kept short turf, we came suddenly 574
in the darkness upon an avenue of living torch- [516]
holders, all seated cross-legged as a mark of [576]
respect, and holding aloft their flaring torches of
tied up reeds. In each man's hand was a piece [416]
of broad banana leaf, hollowed to form a cup,
and filled with sand, into which the dropping
fiery fragments of the torch were caught. The
dancing lights threw into strong relief the powerful
features of the men, sitting silent as a row of
graven images; while dimly in the shadows
behind could be seen rows of spectators, men,
women, and children, all silent and motionless
until we reached the appointed spot, when, at a
given signal by the chief, the deep *tama* was given
by a hundred throats, a sound impossible to set
down on paper, but not unlike a long-drawn
exclamation, "o-o-a."

Taking our seats at one end of this double [349]
line, beneath a square canopy of bamboos and
many-fronded palm leaves, we found that all was
in readiness for the *Kavakavanua*, or ceremony. 431
First of all appeared at the far end of the line a 123
pair of very old men, facing us and kneeling 574
side by side, and holding up on their folded arms 481
a small oblong *tabakau*, or mat of woven coco-nut [235]
leaves. They then advanced, still on their knees,
and in perfect time, progressing by a curious

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series of side or slanting paces, their bodies swaying in unison, and all in dead silence. When they reached us they deposited their burden at our feet, with a few, almost inaudible, words, and then retreated down the long line, still facing us, in the same manner as they had come. This part was called the *Rogo tabakau*, and signified that they had brought the *Draudrau ni Vanua*¹ as a sign that the representative of the Governor—and therefore of the King—held sway over all that had grown upon the land since the last visit. (The presentation of baskets of earth, to signify that the chief held sway over the actual soil itself, had been made to the first Governor forty years before, on the cession of the Colony to Great Britain, so there was no necessity to repeat this.)

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Our *matapuli*² (or aide-de-camp or herald), then touched the *tabakau* in silence, the touch signifying his acceptance, on our behalf, of the emblem.

Then another white-bearded old man came along, also advancing on his knees, with upraised hands grasping a heavy stalk of large green coco-nuts, the nuts themselves, two in number, drooping over and suspended on his left shoulder. One nut represented the visiting chief, and the other the people of the land. He deposited these

¹ Literally, leaves of the land.

² This word is often used in old ceremonies in the Lau Islands instead of the Fijian word "mata ni vanua."

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in front of us, and then waited while the leading *matapuli* of the Nayau people came forward, and, sitting down, laid his hands on the nuts and made a little speech to us, asking that the great chief should excuse any faults he might see, and deal mercifully with the people and protect them as always. 123
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Our *matapuli* then touched the offerings as usual, and spoke a few words in reply, saying that we accepted the offering and that we hoped the land would flourish and the people increase and prosper. This presentation of the nuts on their branch is always called *Ai Fono ni nona cudra*¹ or "the dam against his wrath"; in other words, a propitiatory gift.

The Nayau *matapuli* then came along, crouching, and bringing a number of ivory whales' teeth or *tabua*, heavy curved yellow tusks, each about nine inches long and supported from the two ends by a loop of dyed and twisted coco-nut fibre sinnet. These were offered with a few deprecatory sentences, speaking of "these insignificant teeth" in true Oriental style, though they are actually in this part of the Pacific the greatest gift it is possible to offer, and have an importance far above their intrinsic value. [In the old days the offer (and acceptance) of a *tabua* to a chief meant that any request accompanying it could [237]
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¹ "Bono" in Fijian.

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- 123 not well be refused, and might mean the cementing
574 of an alliance, or the request for a wife, or the
431 sacking of a rival town. Nowadays the presenta-
tion of them is purely a matter of ceremony.
This part of the performance was called the
Qalovi, and should properly have taken place
while we were still on the water, the islanders
swimming out to us carrying the *tabua*, but this
is now seldom done.] Our *matapuli* took them
up in token of acceptance and gazed at them
for a moment in deep admiration, as etiquette
demanded, and then made another short set
speech, repeating his (or, rather, our) wishes that
all should be well with the land.

After this two men staggered in bearing an enormous multi-branching root of green *Yaqona*¹ which they placed at our feet. Our *matapuli* [101] here did the *vaka cobo*, or clapping of the hollowed hands cross-ways, as is always done where *Yaqona* 123 is concerned, and told the men to prepare a bowl 574 of the drink from it.

273 At this point the torches were extinguished, lanterns suspended from the trees, and the parallel lines of men automatically grouped themselves in a half-circle facing us, while an enormous round polished bowl, made of a single section of the *Vesi* tree, and decorated with hanging clusters

¹ Known as Kava or Hava in other parts of the Pacific; and with the drinking of which all important ceremonies must inevitably be connected.

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of large white cowry shells, was brought into the ring. Two or three handsome young men, of magnificent physique—"the *Yaqona* mixers"—then gathered round this, and the ceremony started. A fathom of cowry-strung sinnet hanging over from one portion of the rim was carefully set out so as to point directly at us; and then started the rhythmical pounding in a hollow wooden cylinder of chopped off sections of the root. (The drink was formerly made in Tonga by adding water to chewed contributions from each member of the party, and the Tongans introduced the practice into Lau and thence to Fiji. But in course of years pounding was substituted in Tonga, and the Tongans then thought it a disgusting thing that Fijians should chew! Chewing has now been put down by law in Fiji on hygienic grounds, and is only surreptitiously carried on in certain mountainous districts.)

When the powdered fragments shot into the big bowl were considered sufficient the bowl was tilted towards us to exhibit them, and our *matapuli* then gave the order "*Lose*." Water was then poured in from several *Pupu*,² and some old men started, in the high-pitched, quavering notes that are always used for this, the ancient *Yaqona* song or *méké*, the words of which they themselves hardly know the meaning of.

¹ Wring it out or mix it.

² Lauan word for hollowed entire coco-nut shells suspended in woven nets of sinnet.

123 hardly know the meaning of. After a little while,
 574 the mixture having attained a sufficiently fluid
 292 state, the old leader of the *méké* called out "*Livi
 wai se?*" (Shall water continue to be poured
 or not?); but, apparently, no answer was
 expected, this being a set phrase signifying that
 there was enough. *Mai lose* (the wringer),
 then took up his duties with a thick hank of
 lace-like, but strong, *vau* bark fibres; and,
 sweeping the liquid with circular movements,
 gathered up in the meshwork the solid particles
 of *Yagona*, leaving the turbid brown fluid com-
 paratively clear. This sweeping process was gone
 through many times, the *vau* being wrung out until
 the last drop of fluid had been expressed from it,
 and the fibres twisted until the muscles of the
 man's arms looked ready to crack, the dry residue
 being shaken out over a mat at the side. When
 at last even this expert was satisfied he called
 out, "It is clear," and our *matapulí* responded,
 "*Tu mai*,"¹ at which two young men, decorated
 [301] with coloured leaves round their arms and legs,
 [H15] started to carry round the drink in polished half-
 coco-nut shells.

The *Talai* drank his off and then sent back
 the empty cup along the mats in a spinning
 fashion, as is the custom, and I did the same;
 [201] deep-toned words of "*Maca, ah, maca*,"² fol-

¹ "Let them arise and approach."
² "It is empty" (he has drunk).

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lowed by a measured clapping of hands, greeting this action.

So also when any of the other higher chiefs subsequently drank, the same *maca* and hand clapping followed. The order of precedence was very strictly observed, and he who had poured the water called out, with a peculiar wailing cry, as each cup was filled, "*Kava kuo heka*,"¹ at which the *matapuli* called out the name of some one present.

That individual thereupon clapped his hands [201] once, to draw the attention of the cup-bearer to him, and the cup was presented. In Lau they have now adopted the Fijian order of precedence, and the biggest chief takes the first drink. But in Tonga the chief drinks third, his *matapuli* and one other drinking before him, possibly to safeguard against poison.

And so ended this very impressive ceremony, a relic of Lau in the olden days, and but seldom performed now. And never before or since, in the many years I have spent in the Lau Islands, have I seen it performed among the fantastic shadows and flickering lights from a living lane of torch-bearers.

¹ Literally, "The Kava is lifted"; in other words, "Who is to have this?"

[p.106 is blank]

SOME LEGENDS OF THE EXPLORING ISLES.

I WAS examining a curious stone axe-head in the house of Adi Letila, a very old widow of chiefly rank, at Loma Loma town, when she looked up at me from the woven grass mats on which she was seated, and said, with that innate courtesy which no amount of "civilization" has yet dispelled from the Lau islanders, "It is yours, sir, if you desire to have so small a thing." Knowing that she would only feel hurt by refusal I accepted the gift—mentally resolving to send her some small present in return; and then sat down to have a chat with her. And so we talked of the days of old—the days when this axe-head had been used by her ancestors, or, perhaps, even her father—for so recent is the Stone Age in this race of cultured people among whom the mere absence of iron did not necessarily denote barbarism.

I asked her if she thought it was a good implement to hew out a canoe with, and she replied, with a smile on her still handsome old face, "No, sir;

123 the iron tools that you white chiefs brought to
 412 Fiji far surpass our ancient axes in hardness,
 115 though that stone you hold is indeed a hard one,
 almost hard enough to hurt the children of Rasi-
 kilau." And then she told me the story of
 Rasikilau the Mighty, and from that went on
 to tales of the other gods of the Exploring
 [103] Isles¹ till the lengthening shadows at the house-
 door made me realize with a start how long
 I had spent listening to these legends, told by
 the lips of the last of the old people who still
 held personal belief in them.

*539 "In the days before the first foreign ship came
 773 to Lau," she began, lighting a *suluka*² with a
 776 small fire-brand, "there lived on Cikobia Island
 over yonder a god called Rasikilau, whose move-
 ments shook the hills when he walked, and whose
 head reached the tops of the highest palm-trees.
 Even now, when the men of Cikobia lie out on
 the beach on hot nights, they can sometimes
 feel the earth tremble, and they know that Rasi-
 kilau is moving near them.

"Now, Rasikilau mated with a goddess, a
 princess beautiful to see, who came sailing in
 a canoe from far away to the north,³ so far that
 no man has ever known the name of that land ;

¹ Vanua Balavu and a few adjacent islets of northern Lau.

² Native cheroot.

³ Probably part of the legend that the Cikobia of Lau people are
lauvu, or of common ancestry, with the people of Cikobia I Ila, an island
 to the north of Fiji.

*539 A little shiver passed over the old lady as she
●123 finished speaking, and on looking out I saw that
776 the lengthening shadows of the trees had reached
to the house door. She took up a sheet of *tappa*¹
to put about her shoulders, and I rose to go,
thanking her for the entertainment she had
given me.

"'Tis but a little telling of our ancient stories,"
she said; "and there are many more that come
into my mind. Should you come again there are
certain tales to be told of Dakuwaga, the great
shark-god of eastern Fiji; and of Ulumatua,
the serpent, who was the eldest son of Dengei
himself; but I cannot now remember things as
I could in the days gone by. I am getting old,
I suppose, and my death is not far off," she added
calmly.

[788] And so I left her, the tales of the old gods still
ringing in my ears, while as I passed through the
village the chant of evensong and family prayers
came from the houses of devout Lauans, whose
fathers, perhaps, and whose grandfathers, without
doubt, had brought offerings with fear and
trembling to those same gods of whom I had
heard that day.

¹ Native cloth.

THE SHARK-GOD AND THE FATHER OF SERPENTS.

THE night was dark and my footsteps had been 123
unnoticed as I neared the end of the wooden jetty 776
that lies off the little town of Loma Loma, and
thus, during my evening stroll, I had come
unnoticed upon a small group of natives intently
looking at one of their number who was fastening
something to the under-structures of the wharf.
I distinctly heard the word "Dakuwaqa" as
I approached; but just then one of them saw
me, and, looking a little uncomfortable, they
all stepped on one side as if to show me that there
was nothing there that anyone might not see.
I casually asked what they were doing, and one
of them replied, without hesitation, "We are
just about to start fishing, sir"; so thinking
no more of the matter I wished them luck;
and after an interchange of "good evenings"
started back for home. But as I walked along
the beach under the shadows of the scented, over-
hanging trees, the tales of old Adi Letila recurred
to my mind, and I determined to ask some one

123 in the morning whether, even at this day, the
 776 ancient heathen observances of Dakuwaqa,¹ the
 shark-god, still lingered among the people.

I had noticed one of my policemen among them, and next morning, after a few questions on other matters, I said, "By the way, Apenai, what was that little talk of Dakuwaqa I heard among you men at the wharf last night?" Apenai looked a bit confused, and then replied, "Oh, no, sir; I had nothing to do with that. I had only just arrived when they started to lower the *Yagona* to Dakuwaqa. They are *lialia*² to do such things in these enlightened times. It is true, sir, that this morning it was found that the *Yagona* had been accepted and taken away; but, perhaps, it was not Dakuwaqa after all. No one believes in Dakuwaqa nowadays." But, for all his protests, I firmly believed that my trusty constable had had more than a passing interest in the little tribute to Dakuwaqa, and I decided to ask Adi Letila to tell me more of this mysterious creature, the shark-god who patrolled these waters and disturbed even the official minds of "the force."

[115] That afternoon I found the old lady just
 [531] putting away her stencilling outfit of cut banana
 [285] leaves and *kosa* dyes; for she had had a busy day, for all her seventy odd years, at designing the brown and black patterns on a huge sheet of

¹ Literally, the hull or back of a ship, implying his enormous size.
² Foolish.

THE SHARK-GOD

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white *tappa* that was spread out before the house on the level green turf. When she had comfortably settled herself down and lit the inevitable *suluka*, I asked her to tell me something of Dakuwaqa, and the other gods whom I had heard her mention from time to time.

"It is not for me to say much of Dakuwaqa," she began; "for are we not of the *lotu dina*¹ now? Even before I was born had the earliest missionary arrived at Lakeba. Though it was not till Tui Tubou's² visit—for which I helped to cook the feast—that most of this island were converted. I can only tell you what I have heard from our fathers and of what I myself remember when I was a girl.

"You must know, sir, that we of Northern Lau are of one kin with the people of Vanua Levu (Fiji), and until "the hoisting of the flag"³ we paid tribute to the Lords of Cakaudrove as our masters. But the men of Lakeba Island (who were also the rulers of all the islands to the south) never paid tribute to Cakaudrove, and were lords in their own right. And this is the story of how it came about.

"It was said that Tokairabe, the son of the god Tutumatua or Tui Lakeba, by the goddess Liku Cava, had made some magic fish-hooks

¹ True faith.

² The King of Tonga, who came on an evangelical mission to Fiji in 1853.

³ Cession to Great Britain.

[p. 132 is blank]

A CHAPTER OF HISTORY.

THERE had been a heavy day in the Court-house at Lakeba, and since early morning I had been administering justice to the best of my ability to an ever-changing crowd of white, Lauan, Chinese, and Indian litigants; and incidentally changing also myself at different periods of the day, with what would have been to the denizens of my old Inn a profane rapidity, from Stipendiary Magistrate to Divorce Court Judge, from Commissioner for Civil Causes to Magistrate of the Native Courts. With a sigh of relief I had heard the announcement from my clerk that the day's list was now ended, and I had moved off to the large empty native house, placed at my disposal for the night, where, after a good dinner and a cigar, I was beginning to feel at peace with the world. Suddenly a very old man with a white beard appeared at the open doorway, and silently sat down on the floor near the entrance with a respectful little cough.

"Well, what is it?" I asked, peering into the darkness. "Who is it that comes to see me

123 now? The day's work is ended, and if you have anything to say it would be well to say it in the office in the morning."

[115] "'Tis I—Roko Malani," replied the old man, drawing nearer and clasping my outstretched hand, for he was an old friend of many years' standing and a retired head of a district. "True are your words, sir," he added, "as to the ending of the day; but I have been away working in my plantation—for I can yet teach these young men how the dalo should be planted—and it came to my mind that the payment of the Government rents might take place this evening."

"No, no, Roko Malani," I answered with a laugh. "Are not all the papers and the bags of money locked up in the great iron box (the safe) for the night? The order has gone out that in the morning there will be a rent-paying, and I shall then have to hear all the disputes as to the lands."

[691] He laughed; for it is notorious that there are more land disputes at Lakeba Island to the square mile than on any other island in the group.

173 "Nevertheless, we know that the *malanitu*¹ will give a just decision as to these disputes," said the old man. "But in the time of Ma'afu,²

¹ Government.

² Ma'afu from Tonga made himself practically King of the Lau Islands, and was recognized as such by the British Government on the cession of the whole Colony of Fiji, and retained as Governor of the group at a large salary.